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AN AMAZING DOCUMENT is the report of the President's Research Committee on Social Trends, which has just completed a three-year survey of social conditions in the United States. The factual data assembled will fill thirteen volumes; the main report, already published, runs to more than 1,600 pages. Every significant aspect of human relations in the United States has been inquired into by the committee, which includes among its members sociologists, economists, and other authorities. Their conclusion is both striking and ironic. This group of men and women selected by that arch individualist, Herbert Hoover, has decided, after looking at all the available facts, that American individualism has failed, and that continuation of our present policy of drift may bring disaster. The committee sees the necessity of some sort of social planning. The report warns us that "nothing short of the combined intelligence of the nation can cope with" our present predicaments. The alternatives? "A prolongation of the policy of drift" or some dictatorial system, accompanied by "violent revolution, dark periods of serious repression of libertarian and democratic forms, the proscription and loss of many useful elements in the present productive system."

THIS CONTRIBUTION to social thought in America comes most opportunely. Never before have we so greatly needed to have pointed out by someone with authority the necessity for common or collective social action in dealing with our many social problems. Though the committee clearly wants a planned society, it does not insist on any particular method or scheme for reaching that goal. Indeed, its report declares that its findings are "tentative and alternative." "The committee," the report continues, "does not wish to assume an attitude of alarmist irresponsibility, but on the other hand it would be highly negligent to gloss over the stark and bitter realities of the social situation, and to ignore the imminent perils in further advance of our heavy technical machinery over crumbling roads and shaking bridges." With its usual irony history may remember Herbert Hoover primarily for his appointment of this committee, whose findings have struck such a terrific blow at his personal philosophy. The committee declares it to be "conceivable that without any surrender of our belief in the merits of private property, individual enterprise, and self-help, the American people will press toward a larger measure of public control to promote the common welfare." This is a rationalization not justified by the committee's findings.

MR. ROOSEVELT has let it be known emphatically that he is opposed to the sales tax. He does not say that his mind is "open" on the subject. He does not pretend, because he has not been "officially" informed of every possible relevant fact, that he has no opinion. He does not intimate that he will wait until he gets into office and then appoint a body of experts or fact-finders to report to him upon the matter. He does not profess that the whole matter is none of his business until exactly noon on March 4 next. He is against the sales tax, and he has had the courage to make his attitude known, bluntly. The effect of his announcement was immediate. For the time being, at least, the sales tax has been dropped. Mr. Roosevelt is to be congratulated on his decision, but that decision only increases one's regret that his attitude has been so ambiguous and evasive on the war debts, where a flat insistence on the necessity of revision and a flat promise to address himself to the question when he came into office would in all probability have averted the default by France and by several other nations, and would certainly have been followed by an emphatic rise in the world's markets.

THE LARGEST AND WEALTHIEST industrial State, New York, has at last reached the point where it must ask for federal help in meeting its unemployment-relief problem. In his inaugural address Governor Lehman declared that the time has come "when it is absolutely essential that such application be made to the federal government by our State. It is no longer possible to avoid the necessity." *The Nation* has repeatedly said that the federal government would eventually have to bear the larger share of the country's relief burden; the States, municipalities, and private charities are simply not able to carry on without such assistance. Governor Lehman also asked that the Reconstruction Finance Corporation law be liberalized "so as to make it easier for us to benefit from this federal source in meeting the needs of our unemployed." This too must be done, though both parties in Congress, as well as Mr. Hoover, have thus far in the present session completely ignored the relief

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problem. With Franklin D. Roosevelt, who is thoroughly acquainted with the New York situation, taking office in March, there is hope that something will be done in this respect before many more months. However, the immediate emergency is great; it cannot wait until March 4. Only a few days ago the New York State Temporary Relief Administration estimated that there were at least 1,750,000 persons without work in the State. This is higher by at least a quarter of a million than the most extravagant recent estimate we have seen. If the same ratio holds throughout the country, there are probably 17,500,000 jobless in the United States today, for more than 10 per cent of the wage-earners of the country are residents of New York.

AMERICAN LABOR UNIONS have always been jealous of their traditional right to rule themselves. They have fought against interference in their affairs whether it has come from governmental or other alien quarters or from the higher bureaucracy of the American Federation of Labor. A New York court has now stepped in and taken over the administration of the affairs of a local union. Perhaps the internal controversy in Local 306 of the Moving Picture Machine Operators' Union, of which Sam Kaplan is president, justified this action from the legal point of view. But instead of observing union traditions, the court went outside the labor field to pick two of the three men it appointed to administer the affairs of Local 306. These two are John W. Davis, the corporation lawyer, and James J. Dooling, also an attorney of New York City. While the third man selected, Hugh J. Frayne, president of the New York State Federation of Labor, is of course a union official, he is a member of that higher bureaucracy against which the local and international unions have so long been contending in order to preserve their autonomy. As an isolated case this action of the New York court has perhaps no great importance. But there are indications that it is the beginning of a new public attitude toward the labor movement. At present there is widespread though still latent rebellion among union workers against their leaders. When this rebellion breaks out into the open, to whom shall the rank-and-file members turn for help? Ought they to resort to the more democratic method of reorganizing their own unions without outside interference, or must they now depend upon the courts and upon the assistance of such possibly benevolent representatives of the employing class as Messrs. Davis and Dooling?

THERE IS A WIDESPREAD IMPRESSION, held even by some present advocates of lower tariffs, that previous tariff reductions in our history, either because those reductions were hasty and ill-considered or because they unfortunately occurred just when other factors were making for a depression, have been followed by periods of poorer business. No doubt one of the causes of this belief was the depression that followed the passage of the Underwood tariff in October, 1913. That depression, however, though world wide, was much smaller than the present one, even when we include, in considering it, the collapse of the security, cotton, and other markets brought on by the outbreak of the war. An extremely interesting light is thrown on other tariff changes in our history by Rufus S. Tucker in an article in the *Annalist* of December 9. The tariff has been revised seven times in the last forty-two years—twice downward and five times upward. Mr. Tucker, in a thoroughly objective study, in which he uses the various indices of business activity compiled by the American Telegraph and Telephone Company, by Axe, Ayres, Persons, Snyder, and Standard Statistics, shows that "the worst depressions this country has had since statistics for measuring depressions have been available—the depressions of 1893-1894 and 1930-1932—occurred under the two highest tariffs this country has ever had—the McKinley and the Smoot-Hawley tariffs." He shows, moreover, on the other side, that the Wilson tariff, passed in August, 1894, reducing rates after the very severe depression of 1893, was followed by the sharpest recovery in twelve months that followed any tariff change, up or down. But the myth of tariff prosperity dies hard.

THE JIMENEZ GOVERNMENT of Costa Rica and the Martinez Government of Salvador during the last week of December hurled a challenge at the United States by denouncing the Central American treaty prohibiting the recognition of governments which come into power as a result of revolution. It was only at Secretary Charles Evans Hughes's behest that the five Central American republics signed this treaty at Washington in 1923. Although the United States is not a signatory, the State Department has been most active in compelling observance of this treaty. The primary purpose of our intervention in Nicaragua in 1926 and 1927 was to displace Emiliano Chamorro, who had seized power in violation of this treaty. So long as the United States insists upon applying this treaty, Central America will be confronted with the danger of American intervention whenever a local revolution takes place. Although the Hoover-Stimson Administration returned to the principle of de facto recognition in South America, the Dominican Republic, and Panama, Secretary Stimson has openly defended the principle of "legitimist" recognition embodied in the 1923 Central American treaty. The result of following two conflicting recognition policies is to create the impression that the United States wishes to maintain an exclusive sphere of influence in Central America. Costa Rica and Salvador, the two most advanced republics on the Isthmus, have resolved that any such tutelage shall come to an end; Mexico supports them in this attitude. And in thus repudiating a policy of recognition in which a large measure of dictation by the United States is implicit, they are taking a stand that is both natural and justifiable.

GREECE MAY HAVE BEEN within its rights in refusing to extradite Samuel Insull. He certainly had lawyers enough on his side to make the best argument possible against his being returned to the United States. At this distance, however, we find it rather difficult to follow the argument that if any guilt existed it belonged to the corporations that employed Mr. Insull and not to the precious gentleman himself. Such an explanation may satisfy public opinion in Greece; it does no such thing in this country. The whole procedure, moreover, stamps Samuel Insull as a presumptively guilty man. A really innocent man would come right straight back to the United States to tell the whole story of his activities to a jury. Of course his friends will say that he could not expect a fair trial in Chicago in view of the tremendous feeling against him on the part of the unfortunate victims of his corporate practices, whether these were criminal or not.

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They will doubtless assert, too, that the State officials are bent on persecuting him to satisfy the public clamor. That is all very well, but an innocent man would take the risk and demand vindication. As it is, Greece may yet rue the day that it granted asylum to Samuel Insull; a sentence in one of the dispatches intimates that he will now settle in Greece and engage in the development of public utilities!

A STRIKING COMMENTARY on American political morals is to be found in the case of former Representative Crisp of Georgia. Crisp has resigned from the Tariff Commission, to which he had been appointed by President Hoover, and has accepted a position as legal representative in Washington for the Savannah Sugar Corporation and "some of their associates." These sugar companies doubtless will have business in the future before the Tariff Commission, and certainly will be interested in tax and financial legislation before the House Ways and Means Committee, of which Crisp was formerly an influential member. Some of our public men can apparently change bosses as easily as they change their clothes. But in Crisp's case there was perhaps not a real change of bosses. Throughout his long service in the House he worked faithfully and diligently in behalf of legislation sponsored by financial and business interests. Though a Democrat, he frequently voted with the reactionary Republicans. Among those pleased by this sort of service was Mr. Hoover. When, after having resigned his seat in the House to run for the Senate, Crisp was defeated in the Democratic Senatorial primary in Georgia, President Hoover promptly found a place for him on the Tariff Commission. However, the Senate refused to confirm the appointment on the ground that President-elect Roosevelt should be permitted to choose his own officials. For some unexplained reason Crisp did not want to intrust his political future to the leader of his party. Instead, he accepted the job as lawyer for the sugar interests.

WE HAVE READ without complaint ten thousand publicity releases from Radio City. This blurb to end blurbs is for (our own) immediate release:

> With the exception of the ushers, every fitting in the newest and largest music hall in the world is the biggest of its kind on earth. The chandelier, which throws indirect lighting in all directions in four different colors, accommodates five electricians and their families, while its intense heat is not only sufficient for their cooking and other needs but even supplies heat to four old-law tenements on Second Avenue several blocks east. In the foyer is a mural showing the largest man ever painted bent on the longest quest in history for a fountain of youth which by means of a mechanical device just perfected by S. L. Rothafel, better known as Roxy, is said to throw a stream a little higher than Niagara Falls in winter. The orchestra pit is large enough to be used for a landing field for Zeppelins, in case of attack, and the stage is so wide, deep, and far away that it is impossible to see the stars without a telescope. The whole ensemble strikes a note of intimacy loud enough to be heard in every part of the auditorium.
>
> The entertainment with which the music hall was opened was dedicated to the American public and exceeded all expectations. It was conceded to be the longest, the least original, and the most boring spectacle ever conceived. There were 6,200 guests, including Nicholas Murray Butler and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., better known as Roxy.

Mr. Rothafel has announced that this achievement will be his last venture in the theater. He has succeeded in opening the biggest entertainment hall at the lowest point in the worst depression in the history of the greatest industrial nation on earth. If the project fails, as it is confidently expected to do, it will constitute not only the greatest of several great failures so far enjoyed by Mr. Rothafel, better known as Roxy, but the most colossal failure in entertainment history. S. L. Rothafel could not do less.

"Golden Remedies"

THE scientists are meeting again, and the reports of their year's pursuits once more afford the layman fascinating glimpses into the strange detached world of test-tubes and tissues in which investigators live. But one of the reports this year is doubly strange. It comes from two Chinese scholars, Dr. Amos Benkov Kuan-chin Penn of Johns Hopkins University and Dr. Pei Lung-tang of Harvard; and it informs us that the theory of evolution was known in China 2,500 years ago, that anaesthetics were administered by Chinese surgeons in the third century before Christ, that a Chinese biologist 2,000 years before Harvey found that blood circulates through the body, that the catheter, which the West invented in 1850, was described in "The Thousand Golden Remedies" in the seventh century after Christ, and that dissection was practiced by Chinese anatomists in 1122 B.C.

> All organisms are originated from a single species [wrote Tson Tse in the sixth century B.C.]. This single species had undergone many gradual and continuous changes, and then gave rise to all organisms of different forms. Such organisms were not differentiated immediately, but, on the contrary, they acquired their differences through gradual change, generation after generation.

His description of mutations is original and interesting.

> All species have a single beginning, whole or seed. This seed, after having acquired water, gave rise to minute water organisms called *chi.* Some of these minute organisms, which emerged between water and land, became a kind of lower organism called *qui ping tse i,* which were some sort of organism we call sponge.
>
> These lower organisms made their living on land and became a kind of land animal. Some of these land animals then wandered among the trees and became a sort of bird called *wu chu;* some became worms and butterflies; others became a sort of beast called *chin lin,* and *chin lin* gave rise to *cheng,* and *cheng* gave rise to horse, and horse gave rise to man.

The description of the circulation of blood is brief and clear:

> The blood flows continuously like the current of a river, or the sun and moon in their orbits. It may be compared to a circle without beginning or end.
>
> The blood travels a distance of six inches in one respiration, making a complete circulation of the body about fifty times a day.

As for the art of dissection, the nature of the viscera and tables of weights of various internal organs were set down in the "Hard Classics" more than 3,000 years ago by Chin Yueh Jen, anatomist.

The most interesting thing, however, is the explanation

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given by Dr. Benkov and Dr. Pei of the reason why these scientific discoveries were not handed down through Chinese history to modern times. They assert that Chinese preoccupation with literature and philosophy rather than science during their long history caused the work of zoologists and other investigators to be neglected, so that their discoveries did not carry through.

But the explanation needs to be explained. Why did China neglect science and become preoccupied with literature and philosophy? Can it be that in some still hidden fold of China's past we shall find evidence that she knew also that full-fledged child of science, the machine age, and found it wanting? China has absorbed and forgotten innumerable conquerors, just as her commentators predict that she will absorb and forget the Japanese invaders who are now harassing her. Shall we yet discover that China absorbed and forgot a machine civilization, that she deliberately rejected Technocracy for the stylized poetry of Li Po and the long view of Confucius? In America, in 1933, *Anno Depressionis,* we should like to know.

The Seabury Plan

SAMUEL SEABURY has given us great hope that something may at last be done to bring about sorely needed reforms in the structure of the New York City government. In his final report to the Hofstadter Legislative Committee Mr. Seabury included a draft of a new municipal charter. He asked that the State legislature submit the proposed charter to the voters at a special election this spring. His plan goes much closer to the heart of New York's problem and certainly offers more fundamental reforms than almost any similar scheme we have seen.

Two changes of primary importance are recommended by Mr. Seabury. He would simplify the municipal structure by abolishing the anomalous borough governments and by grouping into ten administrative departments the many bureaus and divisions now existing in the municipal government. The borough governments have long been an unnecessary luxury. The work they perform can be administered more efficiently and economically from a central office. But New York has clung to the borough system because it has provided the ruling political rings with an abundance of jobs for their supporters. Mr. Seabury's plan would not only save the taxpayers a great deal of money—the city pay roll now runs over $350,000,000, about 60 per cent of which, Mr. Seabury declared, is "appropriated for casual and indefinite employees" —but it would at the same time strike a telling blow at the source of power of the political machines. Much the same purpose would be accomplished by consolidating the various offices and bureaus in the municipal government. Mr. Seabury also recommended that the size of the legislative and executive branches be reduced by eliminating the Board of Estimate, the Board of Aldermen, and the Sinking Fund Commission, turning their powers over to the Mayor and a relatively small City Council.

But the most important and most valuable of Mr. Seabury's proposals is to be found in his plan to introduce proportional representation in the election of the members of the council. By itself this would be a tremendous step forward, for it would give minority parties and groups, which are now entirely excluded, a definite voice in the city government. Under the Seabury plan, which is based largely on the Hare system of proportional representation, there would be one representative on the City Council for every 50,000 voters. A minority party with that many followers could concentrate its votes on a single candidate and so be sure of having at least one representative on the council. Unfortunately, the plan divides the city into five election districts comprising the five existing boroughs, so that the minority party would have to find its 50,000 voters within one borough. The Seabury proposal is open to a few minor criticisms. For example, it provides for a council of about twenty-eight members (depending upon the total number of votes cast), which seems to us to be still too large.

We feel that Mr. Seabury erred in not recommending the adoption of a modified city-manager plan. We would not have the city manager given full executive authority. General administrative policies should in any case be left to the discretion of an elected mayor and council, under whom the manager would work. However, if we are to have no city manager, we believe it essential that at least the heads of the ten municipal departments be experts in their fields. They ought also to be removed as far as possible from all political influence and pressure. To achieve this it would be necessary that they be engaged under contract with the City Council, the terms of the contract being so rigidly drawn that the experts could not be dismissed for political reasons, but only for just and sufficient cause.

We are not impressed by the usual criticisms of the city-manager plan. Some Socialists, for example, feel that those who want to be governed by experts betray a secret yearning for a dictator. They declare also that the hired expert could not afford to be as independent in the matter of laying down policies as a politician "with a direct mandate from the electorate." We cannot agree that our desire to be governed by persons trained in the science of government indicates any special hankering for dictatorship. Moreover, the Socialists themselves, if and when they come into power, will have to call upon experts, for no form of government needs technicians more than does socialism. Under our suggestion matters of policy would be left wholly in the hands of the elected representatives of the people, the trained and experienced administrators remaining subordinate to these representatives. However, Mr. Seabury ignores this point altogether. His plan provides that "the head of each of the departments of the city government . . . shall be appointed by the mayor and shall hold office during the pleasure of the mayor." In other words, these jobs would remain political spoils to be disposed of at the pleasure of the dominant party. Perhaps Mr. Seabury believed it necessary to throw this sop to Tammany and its Republican allies in order to make the rest of his program more palatable to the machine politicians. In any event, this is the only really serious defect we find in his plan. Mr. Seabury has done exceedingly well by New York City. It is reported that the Hofstadter Committee will present most of his recommendations, particularly that concerning proportional representation, to the legislature when it meets in January. We hope that the legislature will give the voters an opportunity to act upon this program, and that the people of New York City will accept it. By doing so they would benefit no one more than themselves.

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Where the Sales Tax Falls

GOVERNOR ROOSEVELT'S emphatic rejection of the sales tax makes it seem highly improbable that that device will be included in any measure passed either in the present session of Congress or in the next. Yet the need for increased revenues is imperative; Congress seems to be convinced that they cannot be raised by higher inheritance and income taxes, and it is possible that Mr. Roosevelt, after he becomes President, may be converted to the sales tax in the belief, already so widespread, that this impost must be accepted because no alternative is left. It is important, therefore, that the grave objections to a sales tax should be made plain.

The "manufacturers' excise tax" of 2¼ per cent, recommended by the Administration, would, it must be confessed, at least be less harmful than a general sales tax. The latter contains the possibilities of indefinite duplication and pyramiding. If there were a tax on sales of iron ore, a tax on sales of pig iron, a tax on sales of finished steel, a tax on automobile bodies delivered to an assembly plant, and a tax on finished automobiles, it is obvious that the total tax on the final product could rise to a fantastic figure. A manufacturers' excise tax would eliminate most—though not all—of this kind of pyramiding; and it would be less difficult to administer than a tax on retail sales.

Compared with other forms of taxation, however, the advantages of such a tax are far from clear. Most of the opponents of the tax have held that it would be paid ultimately by the consumer; most of its champions have maintained with equal confidence that it would be paid by the producer. Even if this latter point could be proved, it is difficult to see how it would help the case for the sales tax. For if it were true that the sales tax would be paid entirely by the producer, there would obviously be no need for a sales tax at all. The revenue could be raised simply by an increase in the corporation income tax. If, for example, a tax of 2¼ per cent on gross sales were equivalent on the average to a tax of 12 per cent on net profits, why should not the present corporation tax of 13¾ per cent be increased to 25¾ per cent? The sales-tax advocates would reply, no doubt, that the corporations could not stand so heavy a tax, and that, moreover, it would be double taxation, because the corporation income is taxed again in individual income taxes when it has passed into the hands of security holders. But if the sales tax really fell on the producers, these objections would apply with double force against it. For an increased tax on net earnings would at least have an equitable incidence; it would fall on the corporations that had the money to pay out.

If, on the other hand, the sales tax fell entirely on consumers, it would be still more difficult to justify it. For it would amount to a repudiation of the principle of graduation of taxes; it would tax the poorest at the same rate as the richest, the buyer of the cheapest shoes and stockings at the same rate as the buyer of the most expensive diamond brooch. It would tax the incomes of the poorest elements of the population perhaps 2 per cent and almost certainly more than 1 per cent, yet under our income tax a married man with two dependents pays less than 1 per cent even on a net income of $4,000. The administrative expense of collecting direct income taxes on small incomes is disproportionately high under our present methods; but a simplification of these methods would seem greatly preferable to a sales tax.

It becomes obvious that the real merit of a sales tax, in the eyes of its advocates, lies either in the fact that they do not believe the public will know where and how such a tax is going to fall, or that they do not know themselves. It is this blessed ignorance of the incidence of the tax that is "painless," not the tax itself. How would the tax actually fall? The answer is not a simple one. It might sometimes not be passed along to the consumer, because it would be advantageous to have a "round" price. Such cases, however, would probably be offset by those in which the added price to the consumer, also for the sake of "rounding it out," would be much more than the amount of the tax. In general, however, the tax would tend to fall unfairly both on producers and on consumers. It seems likely that it would be passed on to consumers in the case of most necessities and paid by the producer in that of most luxuries. Wherever it was paid by the producer, it would bear most heavily on those producers with the smallest margin of profit on turnover.

The margin of profit on turnover on the most common articles is frequently small; it is often only 5 per cent or less. In such cases a sales tax of 2¼ per cent, if paid by the producer, would absorb approximately 50 per cent or more of his net income—a very heavy burden. The margin of profit on luxury articles, such as pianos, on the other hand, is nearer 100 per cent, and here the sales tax would not bear heavily on the manufacturer, nor is it probable that it would be passed on. While in the first instance the sales tax might fall indiscriminately on producer and consumer, however, the tendency would be for the burden to be shifted more and more to the consumer as time went on.

If, in spite of the grave objections to it, a sales tax finally seems inevitable, its opponents ought to make one final stand for the principle that it should at least be a graduated tax and not a flat one. This graduation could be based on the ratio of profits to gross sales. A product on which the ratio of the profit to the sales price is 50 per cent, for example, ought obviously to pay a higher percentage tax on gross sales than a product on which the ratio of the profit to the sales price is only 5 per cent. Much less of such a graduated tax would be likely to fall on the consumer than would a flat tax. An industry with a very narrow margin of profit on turnover would very soon raise its prices to pay the tax, but an industry with a wide margin of profit could absorb the tax without raising prices. To the extent that it fell on producers, a graduated tax would adjust itself much better to ability to pay, for to the producer with a narrow margin of profit a small tax on gross income may mean a very high tax on net income; this is less true of a producer with a wide margin of profit. In general the widest margins of profit on turnover are made on luxuries rather than on necessities. To the extent that this is true, the part of the burden that the consumer would have to bear would be shifted, by a graduated tax, to luxury goods.

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Issues and Men

AFTER fourteen and one-half years of service as Editor of *The Nation* I have relinquished that post to become Contributing Editor and turned over the complete control of the paper to three of my associates—Freda Kirchwey, Henry Hazlitt, and Joseph Wood Krutch—and Ernest Gruening, formerly a member of the staff. This does not mean a complete separation, if only because I shall remain as owner and publisher. But I have felt that the time had come for me to free myself of the burdens of active editorship so that I might have more time for speaking, especially over the radio, for writing books, and for engaging in other literary work which has necessarily been limited heretofore. I cannot deny, however, that the break, though primarily a shift in functions, involves a sentimental wrench. My grandfather, William Lloyd Garrison, was a contributor to the first volume of *The Nation,* and my father, Henry Villard, to the third issue, in July, 1865—just after his return from the front after four years of active service in the Civil War as a war correspondent. My uncle, Wendell Phillips Garrison, one of the two founders of the paper, was literary editor and editor during almost his entire active life. Finally, my son, Henry H. Villard, contributed an article to *The Nation* in the issue of November 2, 1932. Five other members of the family have written for it. In the light of this record, it will be clear how much *The Nation* means to me, and how impossible it would be for me to stop writing for it.

Under the title, Issues and Men, Oswald Garrison Villard, The Nation's *Contributing Editor, will write a weekly page of comment on personalities and public affairs.*

Now that I can look at the problem of the liberal journal in a more detached way, I should like to take this opportunity to urge the vital necessity of maintaining it at all costs. It is apparent to anyone with a mind and a conscience how desperate is the present national emergency. But perhaps only those who are giving their lives to the problem of economics and government can realize how essential it is that there shall be free and outspoken journals of opinion such as *The Nation,* the *New Republic,* the *Survey,* the *World Tomorrow,* and the few other publications, both daily and weekly, which can fairly be classed in the group of progressive-minded and economically free journals.

The pressure upon the daily press to conform, and not to attack evil, or espouse new causes, or advocate drastic remedies, grows greater with the depression. Loss of advertising cannot be wholly offset by economies or reductions in the cost of production, or by the laying-off of employees. Hence those newspapers that are weak or timid or deliberately allied with the great business forces which have too long dominated our political life are more careful than ever not to go counter to the prevailing currents of opinion. They have plenty of excuses: they do not wish to "rock the boat"; they assure you that if officials are corrupt or lawless, if the police are brutal and ruthless in dealing with those who dare to exercise their right of public assembly and protest, it is kinder to "treat 'em rough" than to have riots or bloodshed. It is better, they say, to breach the Constitution, to perpetrate much injustice, than to risk disturbance of the public order. Privately they admit that the old order is in a bad way, but publicly they insist that all is well or will be very soon. They do not print all the facts about what is happening the country over—the misery, the suffering, the hunger, the deaths by starvation; to do so, they say, would be to depress the American morale and create the wrong psychology. They are one with President Hoover, whose falsification in 1929 and 1930 of the facts of the depression is not only defended but praised as having been necessary to keep up the country's courage. Surely that is an insulting derogation of American stamina, American bravery in the face of odds, American ability to fight in the last ditch with back to the wall!

In other words, the bulk of the daily press fights blindly and often stupidly for the old system. It has no new program, no plan for reconstruction or reorganization; it merely holds on, hoping that somehow or other prosperity will return so that there may be business at the old stand in the good old way. Surely, we need a free and outspoken press as never before to demand that this chaos and misery shall never come to pass again; to insist that there are ways out to a normal and decent world; to refuse to listen to the suggestion that we must go back to the cycles of great apparent prosperity alternating with horrible depressions, that we must again be a country governed by and for the rich, with materialism our god, the narrowest nationalism our nation's goal, and the heaping up of riches our be-all and end-all.

Of course I know that the liberal journals of opinion also have their weaknesses; that they often err in their judgments, and at times in their methods. They have the defects of their qualities. All of them face recurring deficits, and all but one are greatly handicapped by their lack of funds. We of *The Nation* have rarely produced an issue that came within 50 per cent of our ideal of what it ought to be. We are compelled by the logic of our positions, and by the mass of error and injustice which we must attack, to seem captious, overcritical, unduly fault-finding, never satisfied, never content to allow to frail human nature its due proportion of inherent weaknesses. It is charged that we are never ready to see anything but pure black and pure white, overlooking all intervening shades. Well, many of the criticisms of us may be true, but still I maintain that the liberal press is indispensable and serves a profoundly valuable purpose—yes, an absolutely necessary one—if the country is not to go on the rocks of blind conservatism, base intolerance, and criminal refusal to face conditions as they are.

And so I bespeak your support for *The Nation,* and for the editors who have so generously volunteered to take the burden and responsibility from my shoulders.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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Owen D. Young and Samuel Insull

By NORMAN THOMAS

OWEN D. YOUNG is still front-page news. When President-elect Roosevelt consults him and they are too busy to go out to lunch, a photograph of the distinguished conferees lunching in Mr. Roosevelt's office adorns the window of my neighbor, a storekeeper who regularly posts pictures of the last-minute news. With the help not only of Governor Roosevelt but of President Hoover, Mr. Young makes the first page regularly.

To be sure the days are gone forever when Mr. Young symbolized that new capitalism which, in the opinion of some of those who have now gone in for technocracy in a big way, was about to save the world. Walter Lippmann's sedate optimism about disinterestedness in business, as exemplified by the General Electric, and Stuart Chase's more tentative hopes of leading business men as potential planners read curiously at the end of 1932. But Mr. Young still stands out as the internationalist, friend of Russia, and influential economic adviser to the incoming Administration, which, as everybody knows, is committed to the "new deal." In spite of the strictures that Paul Y. Anderson and others have published in the columns of *The Nation* on Mr. Young's role in the formation of the Radio Corporation of America, in spite of the amazing stories of what the Radio Corporation of America did to the stock of Radio-Keith-Orpheum and its more or less innocent investors—a story, by the way, which got less publicity when I told it in the last campaign than any other important statement I made —Owen D. Young, chairman of the board of directors of the General Electric and chairman of the executive committee of the Radio Corporation of America, philanthropist, patron of education, reputed author of the Dawes Plan as well as of its now defunct successor, the Young Plan, is still news.

Samuel Insull, recently of Chicago and now of Greece, is also news—but not good news. The collapse of the complicated structure of holding and investment companies through which Samuel Insull, his son, and his brother controlled a two-billion-dollar public-utility group has been called the second greatest collapse since the stock market was invented. Scores of thousands of small investors were dragged down to ruin with it. Samuel Insull and his brother are now under criminal indictments. Holding and investment companies are in bankruptcy, and lawyers for the numerous creditors are seeking to discover all possible assets to save their clients from complete loss of their investments.

Under these circumstances one might think that the juxtaposition of the names of Owen D. Young and Samuel Insull would make big news. Not so, however. For the most part it has been ignored by the press. The *Times* was the only New York paper to find space for a competent report of the proceedings before Referee John E. Joyce of 70 Pine Street, New York, under order of a federal judge of Chicago, in which Mr. Young's connection with the Insull failure was examined; and even the *Times* published the story far back in its financial pages. Yet few bits of testimony shed a more glaring light on the way in which capitalism, new and old alike, goes about the business of operating for the maximum amount of private profit a great public utility which in a sane world would be directed by engineers for the use of society.

Mr. Young was dragged into the complicated hearings on the Insull bankruptcy after this fashion: An able attorney, L. F. Jacobson of Chicago, representing creditors of the bankrupt Insull companies, procured a hearing in New York to find out whether certain New York banks were not holding collateral which in point of law and justice should go into a common pot to satisfy, so far as possible, the demands of all the creditors. Under the law, if a bank makes a loan to a corporation which goes bankrupt in less than four months thereafter, such securities as may have been deposited as collateral for the loan become not the property of the bank in particular but of the creditors in general. The question then was: Did the banks make loans improperly or juggle the date of receivership to their own advantage? This inquiry involved the General Electric, which had made Insull a $2,000,000 loan in December, 1931, at a time when Mr. Jacobson claimed its officers knew that the Insull investment companies were insolvent. The particular one of Insull's many companies at which the New York inquiry was directed was the Insull Utility Investments, Inc. This was an investment trust organized by Samuel Insull in order to perpetuate his family's control of their vast structure of public-utility groups, into which, in the boom days of 1928 and 1929, the public was buying. Insull put his own holdings in his own companies into the portfolio of the investment trust and then, on the basis of these securities, sold preferred and common stock in the trust in order to get more money to buy more securities of his companies, which, of course, he as manager of the investment trust could control. This company was one of three Insull companies which were beneficiaries of the $2,000,000 loan made by the General Electric in December, 1931.

It was not merely the $2,000,000 loan made by the General Electric on his recommendation which brought Mr. Young into the picture. He had also acted as mediator to keep the banks in line and to stave off proceedings by any one of them which would have precipitated Insull's bankruptcy. Perhaps the best way to bring out the facts and their meaning is to give the story of what happened, first, as Mr. Young wanted to make it appear to the referee in bankruptcy, and, second, as it appeared after Mr. Jacobson had finished questioning the witness.

According to Mr. Young it happened this way: Some time in December, 1931, Samuel Insull, Sr., an old friend of his, a splendid customer of the General Electric Company, and one of the great men in the public-utilities field, came to him to borrow $2,000,000 from the General Electric. On the basis of Mr. Insull's reputation, his personal indorsement of the loan, and the deposit of collateral which Mr. Insull agreed to keep up to a market value 40 per cent in excess of the loan, the General Electric granted the $2,000,000 with no questions asked. Up to that time Mr. Young had heard little or nothing to create any doubt in his mind of the financial soundness of the Insull companies. As a friend, and at the

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request of Mr. Insull, he had bought stock in the Insull Utility Investments in January, 1929. He did not buy as a speculation but to stay in, because the elder Insull "said he would feel better and safer if I had an interest in it." Originally he put in $50,000, which amount was raised by allotment to $175,000. Mr. Young did not explain, nor was he asked to explain, the ethics of a situation in which he went in at an insider's price of $12 a share while the public was allowed to purchase at $30 or above. Before the crash the stock went to $149 a share. Mr. Young did not even read the reports of the company. No matter what they showed, "I could not have sold at any time in that period to make a profit or take a loss without incurring Mr. Insull's displeasure."

By February, 1932, however, things were so bad that another appeal had to be made to Mr. Young, this time to use his influence to procure from New York bankers an agreement not to call their loans or ask for any more security on them until some time in August, 1932. There were some differences of opinion and interest between the Chicago and New York bankers. Insull inter-company relations were so complicated that they continually had to be watched. Finally Mr. Young worked out an agreement whereby an expert accountant in Chicago named Arthur Anderson was to watch operations for the New York bankers, who agreed for the time being at least, and until further notice, not to press their loans. Mr. Anderson's report, however, resulted in a general agreement of the New York and Chicago banks on April 8, 1932, that the situation could not be saved and that the stand-still agreement must end. On April 16 a receivership was declared. Mr. Young refused to admit that the receivership was declared because the company was insolvent in the sense that its total liabilities greatly exceeded its assets. It was merely unable at that time to raise money to meet obligations as they matured. Following the first day's hearing Mr. Young issued a public statement to the effect that "the most you can say about that old man [Insull] is that he had too much confidence in this country and in his own companies." According to a recent report of the receiver of the Insull Utility Investments, Inc., that company alone sold stocks and bonds for more than $600,000,000 on the basis of net assets now worth $35,000,000; yet the Insull set-up, Mr. Young now maintains, was sound. So much for the Young version. Now let us look at the same story after Mr. Jacobson had completed his questioning.

Although Mr. Young first said that he made no real examination into Insull affairs until February, 1932, and did not recall "ever receiving or ever seeing any annual report," he had to admit not only that he probably did receive reports but that he had received a financial statement of the Insull companies in December, 1932, prior to the General Electric loan. He passed on to Gerard Swope, president of the General Electric, the responsibility for going over the reports in detail but admitted, "It is very likely that I saw them," when he was handed the documents in question. These documents showed that Insull Utility Investments, Inc., which had lost money ever since its first year, had in 1931 lost about $1,500,000, and that its position was steadily growing worse. At the very time the loan was approved, the securities provided only a 30 per cent and not a 40 per cent margin in the case of two of the three companies among which it was divided. Moreover, the accounts receivable by the investment company, totaling some $12,000,000, to which Mr. Young at one point in the examination referred as helping to justify a loan, were shown to be receivable only from instalment-plan purchasers who were being allowed to pay for stock in a company on the edge of bankruptcy. Furthermore, although Mr. Young kept insisting that he was dealing with the situation "in a large way" and not bothering with details, it is almost impossible for a layman reading the minutes of the hearings to believe that a man of his wide business experience did not know that the Insull companies were virtually insolvent at least at the time when he made the banks agree to a stand-still arrangement.

Still worse, Mr. Young was finally forced to admit that in December he knew there was outstanding $60,000,000 in debentures, that is, in certificates of indebtedness to be paid at a given date, which certificates were protected presumably by securities in possession of the company. Mr. Jacobson argued that the $2,000,000 loan was to pay the interest on the debentures in order to keep the holders quiet a while longer. Neither Mr. Young nor any of the bankers yet examined, however, could be made to admit that they were aware that the debentures had been issued on the plainly published stipulation that the Insull company would incur no added indebtedness if, as a result, its total indebtedness should exceed 50 per cent of the value of its assets. Actually all available securities of the Insull investment and holding companies were put up with the bankers. Finally, the date of receivership, April 16, eight days after a conference of bankers had agreed that the companies could no longer be saved, was set just outside the four-month limitation period and permitted some of the twelve banks which had been lending money to Insull to claim securities deposited as collateral on loans made or renewed the previous December. On being asked by Mr. Jacobson, "Didn't you know that lawsuits were bought off during that time to defer the bankruptcy until April 16?" Mr. Young replied, "I do not know that." He insisted that the key to the situation was bank loans and that he was justified in considering such loans by themselves, ignoring altogether the interests of instalment-plan purchasers of Insull securities and of more than 20,000 holders of debentures in the Insull Utility Investments Company, whose $60,000,000 worth of claims was completely stripped of the protection of underlying securities because these had been deposited with the banks as collateral. Mr. Young's general opinion was that if the banks could be satisfied, the companies might manage to keep going, and these debenture holders, into whose rights he never inquired, might be saved.

So the matter rests as far as the relation of Owen D. Young to the Insull failure is concerned. So it rests, that is, unless the testimony of Gerard Swope or someone else yet to be examined sheds new light upon it. Only one of two conclusions is possible from the testimony: first, that Mr. Young was in collusion with the bankers to protect their interests at all costs and was willing to gamble with them, utterly ignoring the small investors, on the slim chance of saving Insull, who was a good customer of the General Electric and in whose companies he, Young, was a heavy stockholder. The alternative is that Mr. Young, acting on his own initiative and according to his best judgment, took the immense responsibility of lending a large sum of his company's money without acquainting himself with the most elementary facts

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concerning the financial situation of the companies he was trying to save, or the legal claims of holders of debentures. He could only think in terms of big business and big loans and he took none of the precautions so stringently demanded in dealings with small borrowers. In either case the revelation is disastrous, not merely to Mr. Young as the hero of a new industrial era, the shining example of the statesman in business, but to the system which makes such action on the part of its own leaders a matter of course. The new capitalism seems to be much the same sort of glorified racket as the old.

The Farmer's Bootstraps

By JAMES E. BOYLE

SINCE the half-billion-dollar Farm Board experiment proved such a costly and unmitigated failure, new and bigger experiments are almost sure to be made by Congress. Two measures are now pending. The allotment plan, as applied to wheat, means a sales tax on bread of one or two cents a loaf. The equalization fee is also a sales tax on bread, but contains no "allotment" features or other control of production.

The equalization fee is one type of valorization. To "valorize" is to give to a commodity by law a value different from or higher than its true or market value. The equalization fee is one of many theoretical plans for artificially elevating prices. More specifically, it is a scheme to elevate the price of a surplus. The history of 5,000 years of agriculture fails to record one single example of valorization in agriculture which helped the farmer as much as it hurt him. The equalization fee is a patent medicine, and a powerful patent medicine, the first dose of which would stimulate but the subsequent doses of which would cause the most harmful reaction. There are four fatal objections to the fee: it would not be paid by the producer of the commodity; the producer would not in the long run be the chief beneficiary of it; it would constitute dumping under our own tariff law and under the tariff laws of many of our customers; it would increase the surplus, making worse the disease it aims to cure.

Most of the arguments in defense of the equalization fee are a tissue of sophistries. It is held, for example, that this fee is not a subsidy, but is borne by the producer himself as his contribution, his share of the expense. The fact is that this fee is paid by the consumer, not by the producer. So far as the producer is concerned, it is a direct bonus, subsidy, gift, or whatever you choose to call it. A little hard and clear thinking will show that this is the case. Its workings when applied to wheat may be illustrated by the following example: Assume that the farmer's wheat is 40 cents a bushel. He wants to see this price elevated by the amount of the tariff, namely, 42 cents. That is, he wants to raise the domestic price of wheat to 82 cents, while the world price is 40 cents. The government, through the Farm Board, undertakes by means of the equalization-fee plan to put the price of American wheat on a "domestic basis," that is, at 82 cents. The Farm Board's first step, then, is to set the price at 82 cents. This means, of course, that our 7,000 flour mills must pay 82 cents for their wheat. This is the pegged price. They cannot buy it for less. Next, the Farm Board dumps the surplus abroad at 40 cents a bushel, the world price. The Farm Board, to operate in wheat, must buy the surplus, some 200,000,000 bushels, at 82 cents and sell it at 40 cents. It must also pay numerous salaries and other administrative costs. This loss and these costs must be subtracted from the price the wheat farmer receives. If this loss and these costs amount to 15 cents a bushel, as they doubtless would, then 15 cents a bushel is subtracted from the price the wheat farmer receives. And 82 cents minus 15 cents equals 67 cents. This gives the farmer a net price of 67 cents. The results of the operation thus far are two—namely, to elevate the price to the farmer 27 cents a bushel; and to elevate the price to the mills 42 cents a bushel.

The fee, 15 cents, representing the export loss and the administrative costs of the Farm Board, is called the "equalization fee." The flour mills pay it because it is added to the price they pay for wheat. They pay 82 cents for the farmer's 67-cent wheat. The wheat farmer does not pay it. In fact, he collects 27 cents a bushel extra because of this scheme.

I have said the mills pay it. They do, in the first instance. But they pass on this charge to the domestic consumers, that is, to the bread eaters of the whole country and to the users of mill feeds. Since wheat products play a big role in the dairy and poultry ration, this tax would largely be passed on to the dairy and poultry farmers. In other words, the scheme gives a subsidy or bonus to the wheat farmers of 27 cents and collects a fee of 42 cents from the dairy and poultry farmers to help make up this bonus. Yet wheat ranks seventh in importance among our farm products, both dairy and poultry ranking ahead of it. For the last five years the average per capita value of farm output has run as follows:

Milk	$25.23
Corn	15.91
Hogs	14.21
Cotton	11.06
Hay	10.39
Poultry	10.09
Wheat	8.53

So the scheme is a scheme to rob Farmer Peter to pay Farmer Paul.

The mills would suffer seriously in this one respect—namely, their export trade in flour would be instantly killed. They could not buy 82-cent wheat and compete abroad with 40-cent wheat. This destruction of the mills' export business would curtail mill purchases to strictly domestic needs, and thereby impose terrific losses on our milling industry.

We come now to our second question: Who is the chief beneficiary of this fee? There are 2,000,000 wheat farmers in the United States who would feel some immediate benefit from this tax. In the example we are giving, this bonus would amount to 27 cents a bushel the first year. But the chief beneficiary would be, first, the European mills which compete in Europe with our mills, and, second, the European consumers of the 40-cent wheat shipped to Europe. It would

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be a frank donation to them, as compared with American consumers, of 42 cents a bushel on 200,000,000 bushels.

This brings us to another extremely vital issue involved in the equalization-fee plan. Does it constitute dumping? The answer is, yes. All our principal customers have anti-dumping laws similar to our own, and this is what our law provides:

> Sec. 303. Countervailing Duties—Whenever any country, dependency, colony, province, or other political subdivision of government, person, partnership, association, cartel, or corporation shall pay or bestow, *directly or indirectly,* any bounty or grant upon the manufacture or production or export of any article or merchandise manufactured or produced in such country . . . and such article or merchandise is dutiable under the provisions of this act, then upon the importation of such article or merchandise into the United States . . . there shall be levied and paid, in all such cases, in addition to the duties otherwise imposed by this act, an additional duty equal to the net amount of such bounty or grant, however the same may be paid or bestowed.

Stated in plain English, the law says that when any government or any association or any person, *directly or indirectly,* pays any bounty or grant upon the production or upon the export of a commodity, then this payment constitutes dumping and we will impose countervailing duties. If our customer countries invoked their anti-dumping laws against us, as they certainly would, then what should we do with our surplus?

Finally we come to the principal objection to the fee. The free market penalizes the farmer for producing a big surplus. The market price is the producer's best barometer of consumer demand. The equalization fee destroys this barometer. It goes even farther in unbalancing the world's agricultural production: it rewards the farmer for producing a big surplus and bribes him to raise a still bigger surplus. Our Department of Agriculture is wisely spending much time and money trying to help farmers adjust their production to the market demand. Here the equalization-fee scheme comes along and encourages farmers to disregard the simplest principles of supply and demand and rewards them for doing so. So we may feel sure that the equalization fee, like Brazil's coffee-valorization scheme, would at the end of five years leave the wheat farmer with an unparalleled surplus of wheat on hand (and of whatever other products the fee was applied to) and a price much lower than the present one.

If we turn to the allotment plan we find it is also a scheme for giving the farmer a bonus and putting the burden on the consumer. It is sometimes called a tariff-adjustment plan, but this name is pure camouflage, since the scheme has no connection whatever with the tariff. The allotment plan is best understood when examined in reference to wheat. Seen in its stark and naked form, the plan is a sales tax on bread. The tax is paid by the consumer. It is used for two purposes: first, to pay the expenses of administration; second, to give the balance, if any, to the owners of wheat land. The aim is to increase the income of the wheat farmers by giving to each of them an annual bonus, whether or not they grow any wheat. At the same time the plan aims to control and decrease wheat production. Control over the farmer's wheat acreage by the Washington bureau is called "voluntary," because only those farmers who sign the contract with the government will receive the bonus. Once the farmer signs the contract, however, the Washington bureau may virtually take over the management of his farm and tell him how much to decrease his wheat acreage, what crops to grow on the idle wheat land, and, in general, deprive him of the liberty of running his farm to suit himself.

The tax on consumers is to be collected first at the mills. The mills will pass it on to the bakers, and the bakers will pass it on to the consumers. No tax is to be collected on wheat products exported or used at home for animal feed. The tax is limited to domestic consumption of wheat for human food. This fact must be kept in mind when we consider the administrative difficulties of the plan.

Can this plan be administered? Probably not. It is too complicated and too expensive. First comes the Washington bureau, with a staff large enough to keep books with each of the 2,000,000 wheat farmers, inspect their contracts, determine whether or not these contracts have been fulfilled, and then mail a check to each farmer at the end of the year, if that farmer has lived up to his contract. There are to be some 44 State committees, on salary. These will deal with the 2,500 county committees in the wheat counties of the United States. These groups will also be on salary. Then come the 7,500 township committees, also on salary.

The big machine is set in action when the bureau at Washington, after examining wheat statistics, determines what our wheat acreage should be next year in order to reduce our annual production from 800,000,000 bushels to 600,000,000. This is a hard job because the weather is uncertain, so uncertain, in fact, that one acre of wheat may produce one bushel or twenty-five bushels or fifty bushels. However, the Washington bureau, in its wisdom, will set an arbitrary acreage. An "allotment," or quota, is then assigned to each State; the State gives each county its allotment of acreage. Finally the county committee gives each farmer his allotment, if he has signed the contract.

Here we come upon one significant detail. The farmer's quota is based on his acreage for the past five years. So each farmer must be visited and his production record obtained. But very few farmers keep such records, and Mr. Farmer will depend on his memory—or his imagination. The bigger his average production is, the bigger his share of the bonus. So he will surely make his record liberal. The township committees will have the ugly duty of policing their neighbors to see that the contract is obeyed and that a correct production report goes to Washington at the end of the crop year. For on the basis of this report the Washington bureau will make out each farmer's check.

The 7,000 flour mills will also be closely policed. When a mill grinds wheat it produces six or eight products—flour, bran, shorts, middlings, "red dog," and so on—only one of which goes into human food. Products which are exported must also be segregated and exempted from the tax. So we see that from 10,000 to 20,000 persons will be required to administer the plan for wheat alone. But the farm blocs in Congress, by the old log-rolling process, will doubtless try to extend the plan to cotton, rice, prunes, tobacco, hogs, corn, oats, rye, barley, and so on, and also to increase the bonus. How long would or could the consumers foot the bill?

I have consulted many farmers on this plan. Nearly all of them smile and say: "You can't lift yourself by your bootstraps. This plan is meant to help the politician, not the farmer."

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Stalin Faces the Peasant

By LOUIS FISCHER

Moscow, December 9

IT is almost eighteen months now since Stalin delivered his famous "six-point" speech. That was his last public utterance. A year and a half is a long time for a leader to remain silent in a country like Russia where the "chief's" silence means that his subordinates never say anything new. The nation yearns for guidance and light. Stalin was expected to address the October plenary session of the Communist Central Committee. One could feel the whole country hold its breath in eager anticipation. He disappointed it. On November 6 a vague rumor circulated here that Stalin, following the Lenin tradition, would make an important political statement at the annual anniversary meeting of the Moscow Soviet. The city waited excitedly. Instead, we were treated to a dull report badly read by President Kalinin.

Silence may mean self-assurance and perfect control. It may reflect an impasse. It inspires sometimes a feeling of respect for the leadership's wisdom, sometimes an uncomfortable sense of drift. The head of a state must not say too much, but he dare not say too little. Today the entire Soviet nation wants Stalin to take it into his confidence, give it an interpretation of the recent past and a peep into the future. A big change is apparently in preparation. But the masses, harassed by the daily struggle for existence, are too distressed to enjoy the perspective of the few on high.

Every one of Stalin's pronouncements since 1929 has been a milestone in Soviet development. Each brought him the sympathy of some section of the population. His "dizziness-with-success" article in March, 1930, pleased the peasants who had objected to forced collectivization. His "six-point" speech on June 23, 1931, won the applause of the intelligentsia of labor. In it Stalin dealt with what is perhaps the Bolsheviks' greatest problem at this stage of the revolution—the application of private initiative in a Socialist economy. The fifteen years of sovietism have demonstrated that social incentives are a powerful lever and can be translated into increased productivity. But without immediate gains to the individual, social incentive may gradually become inoperative.

This problem remains. The idea of shock brigades, or groups of conscientious workers bent on especially intensive effort, is not new. Lenin spoke of it far back in 1920. He saw the thing very clearly, however. He said: "The workers are materialists: if you want shock-brigade work, they say, give us bread and clothing and meat." Today, however, the Bolsheviks seem to have forgotten not only that the workers are materialists, but that they themselves are materialists. Every day the *Pravda* and *Izvestia* print editorials revealing some economic shortcoming. Here an industry has failed to fulfil its program. Here the transport system functions poorly. In the North Caucasus grain collections have fallen below normal. Why? Bad organization, slack guidance by party members, insufficient loyalty to Moscow's instructions, and so on. The reasons are always subjective. These Marxists, whose philosophy is based on economic determinism, stress only the psychological element. They glory in the often repeated nonsense that objective difficulties do not exist. They do exist, and the Bolsheviks strive to cope with them, yet by failing to talk frankly about them the Communists either mislead the people or, more frequently, undermine the average citizen's faith in their incomplete analyses of current events. This emphasis on subjective causes is all the more harmful because it appears to justify draconian steps. Since men are at fault, men must be punished. What is needed, however, is not punitive measures which embitter their victims but curative measures which remove concrete ills.

The course of the Bolshevik Revolution is still determined by one central fact—the relationship between the proletariat and the peasantry. When Lenin, in March, 1921, reintroduced private capitalism into Russian economy in order to placate the village, he had no fears. He was certain that the city workers could maintain their dominant position in the state. He was right. Since then the city has grown infinitely stronger. The proletariat is much more numerous; the government has built new giant industries; the value of industrial products almost equals that of Russia's crops. In the last ten years the economic balance has definitely shifted in favor of the proletariat. This significant historic change was achieved at the expense of the peasantry but with its help. The village has carried a large part of the cost of the city's progress. But this process of making the peasant pay the piper has gone so far that a stage of diminishing returns has now been reached.

How did the village pay the city's bills? Through state procurements of grain, meat, cotton, flax, hides, and the like. While obstructing the peasant's access to the open market, the government more or less compelled him to sell his surpluses to it at fixed prices. At the beginning of the Five-Year Plan period the peasant could get very few manufactured articles for money thus obtained; more recently the government has paid in paper rubles so devaluated as to make its procurements almost equal to requisitioning. At the same time prices of city commodities rose steeply. The village protested. It did not wish to give away its grain for next to nothing. As a concession the Kremlin, in a series of decrees published last May, cut the amount of procurements and allowed the collectivized peasantry in the kolhozi to sell what remained at any price it could extort on the free market. At the same time the government shipped large quantities of consumers' goods into the villages.

But the new system of kolhoz trade is not working well. It is doubtful whether important grain-growing areas like the Ukraine, North Caucasus, the Volga region, and the central black-earth district will have much left for open sale when the government finishes its procurements on January 15. The May reforms, therefore, have introduced no great change. They have merely added a new irritant—the peasant feels that if the state did not take so much, he could sell on the free market and make some money. As a result of all these circumstances the peasants have this year stubbornly resisted the state's grain collections. Procurements were always a difficult task. Inflation has intensified opposition.

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Even the big state farms, or sovhozi, which are direct servants of the central government and ought, therefore, to submit automatically to grain deliveries, have preferred to sell on the open market at inflation prices. How natural, then, that the collective, which despite its high-sounding name plate and exalted purpose is still merely a group of backward peasants suddenly precipitated into the Socialist caldron, should forget social incentives and try to get as much as possible for its crops. The Soviet press makes no secret about the peasants' attitude. "Bread procurements in East Kazakstan," reads a *Pravda* news item, "are proceeding in an atmosphere of bitter class war." "There is grain in the North Caucasus," says another dispatch, "but that grain is hidden from the government in pits." It then speaks of the "sabotage of procurements." Comrade Shubrikov, the party chief for the entire central Volga region, reports that "we have collective peasants and private peasants who fail to carry out the collections plan in the hope of speculating with grain later. They sit and wait for the free sale of grain"—which will be permitted, presumably, after the national procurement program is fulfilled on January 15. The Bolsheviks attribute this sabotage to "kulak psychology," but it is really good business sense. Not only so-called kulaks but middle and poor peasants and, significantly, even party members have obstructed grain deliveries—sometimes by lying about the size of the harvest and sometimes by concealing part of it underground or, in worse cases, by letting it rot on the fields. Rather than give up their grain and meat to the official collector for depreciated paper rubles, the peasants waste it, feed it to animals when they can, and distribute excessively large reserves among themselves. Shrill summonses from the daily newspapers and repressive measures by official visitors from Moscow may bring some of the grain out of the pits, but this method will have to be repeated year in and year out with diminishing success unless procurements are abolished once and for all. This year a new form of passive resistance has been added to other types of obstruction: Kaganovich, second in command, admitted recently that the peasants in the Moscow district sowed fewer potatoes because they did not wish to plant in order that a government collector might procure. This is now a common phenomenon. Agricultural output must drop noticeably in consequence of this situation.

Something is not clicking right in the Soviet administrative machine. Usually it is most sensitive to passive popular pressure. It crushes a part of such pressure ruthlessly and then makes partial concessions to the rest of it. But this time the machine is slow to react. And yet the field is all prepared for a shift of policy. The longest step toward such a shift is the slow and painful attrition of the ration system. By cutting bread rations, by legalizing the free sale of bread outside the ration system, and by extending the method whereby each factory or economic unit finds independent sources of food and goods, the government is liberating itself from the burden of feeding the population through a centralized distributing agency. To meet the obligations imposed by this burden, the government had to procure the peasants' surpluses. By scrapping the arrangement the government could do away with the obnoxious procurements. G. Nehman, a Soviet economist, in the June issue of *Planned Economy,* stated that kolhoz trade "made it possible already in this year to take considerable measures toward reducing the rationed distribution of goods and limiting the centralized supply system." The assumption was that when the collectives began to sell on the free market, the population could cover its needs in that way and relieve the government of the necessity of rationing. The trouble is, however, that the kolhoz markets offer too little. Yet rationing is being cut down. This produces a food shortage. Moreover, since wages have not kept pace with inflated currency and price tendencies, the free market is not accessible to the worker or the low-salaried government official.

Only two alternatives are open: either the state will resume rationing—and the development is all in the opposite direction—or it will open the gates wide to free kolhoz trade by eliminating procurements. The combination of kolhoz trade and procurements is illogical and impracticable. If you allow the peasant to sell directly to the ultimate consume you must leave him something to sell.

The Bolsheviks have been tardy in submitting to this iron logic. They probably think that they might as well have the benefit of this year's procurements, but they will pay a high price in peasant resentment for that benefit. They may feel that considerations of prestige require a continuation of the present policy for some time so that the peasant will not think he forced the government to retreat. They perhaps hope that by the next harvest the restriction of food exports, the drop in imports of heavy machinery, the slackening of new construction, and the concentration on light industries will enable them to reduce price levels, stabilize the ruble, and produce a volume of consumers' commodities big enough to convert procurements into a normal exchange, at market prices, of the peasants' real surpluses for the city's goods.

This is the goal of the Five-Year Plan, and I think that ultimately the purpose will be achieved. It would mark the beginning of the end of the proletariat's exploitation of the peasantry. It would mean that the peasantry would commence to reap the reward for its sufferings. It would create a real instead of a paper *smychka,* or bond between countryside and town. But I doubt whether so radical a change in the situation can intervene before the next planting season, and it is that which is important. For unless the peasant receives a very firm assurance that he will not have to submit to procurements again next autumn and winter, he will not plant this coming spring, and the Soviet Union will have another bad harvest.

On this point the Kremlin must speak quickly—in January preferably, in March at the latest. March is the final term in Russia for effective agrarian reforms. If the peasantry were vocal it would demand, first, a reduction in the quantity of grain it must yield to the state. This year procurements amount to 15,000,000 tons—a recent reduction from the original quota of 18,000,000 tons—but since the government is scrapping rationing, and since it has its own state farms, it should not need more than 7,000,000 or 8,000,000 tons in 1933. Second, the peasant must know in advance what part of his crops is to go to the authorities. Procurements have been arbitrary. The peasant plants. Then an official inspects his crop as it stands in the field and says: "You will have to give us x poods." A month later, if the procurement quota of the district is not fulfilled, the collector may reappear and say: "You will have to deliver x plus y poods." The advantage of the *prodnalog,* or grain income tax, which Lenin substituted in 1921 for the requisitions of

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military communism was, as he then declared, that "the exact amount of the tax is known in advance, that is, as early as spring, to every single peasant. This will mean less abuse in the collection of the tax. This will mean that every peasant will be more interested in increasing his acreage, in improving his household, and in striving to increase his harvests." Like many other things that Lenin said, these words apply with equal or even greater force today. Lenin regarded the tax as transitional. "Neither requisitions nor a tax but the exchange of the output of large ('socialized') industry for peasant products," he wrote, "that is the economic essence of socialism, its foundation." To Lenin such an exchange was a vague dream. Now it is beginning to be possible. But the situation requires careful, subtle handling, and this year the Bolsheviks have been giving it crude, bureaucratic handling.

Stalin ought to come out and say: "We are abolishing the ration system with all its billions of yards of red tape, theft, and favoritism, and all the specially privileged retail stores. We can therefore abolish procurements. We give free rein to kolhoz trade. We therefore give free rein to inflation, and recognize it officially after it has existed in fact for several years. We are sure, however, that the emphasis now being placed on the production of consumers' goods, our decision to cut imports and exports, and our slackening of the tempo of industrialization will shorten the period of inflation and gradually lessen its hardships even before it ends. We will combat inflation, too, by cutting government expenses. Kolhoz trade, moreover, will expedite the turnover of goods and thus operate against inflation."

Stalin must not only say these things. In some way he must make the peasants believe that this new policy is "serious and for a long time," for the people no longer take Moscow at its word. There has been too much arbitrary ruling and too much superimposition of authority. The village collectives must be permitted to manage themselves democratically. The factory cooperative stores must be operated by the workers and not by the director with so-called proletarian control as an ineffective supplement. What the Soviet Union needs to make necessary reforms real is self-interest, initiative, and responsibility from below instead of dictation from above—more economic democracy.

I do not see how the new policy can safely be delayed much longer. It is already seven months late. Writing from Moscow as far back as July 17, I suggested the complete abolition of rationing.* That it must ultimately come I have no doubt. And if, after a difficult period, normal exchange of goods between Socialist city and collectivized village is finally established, the country will not have suffered in vain. Then the Soviet Union will be on the threshold of socialism.

I suspect, however, that the Bolsheviks may prefer to introduce the reforms piecemeal. This is regrettable. They will argue that inflation may get beyond control. If they increase the output of their light industries, this danger is not great. They may be afraid that if they leave too large surpluses in the hands of the peasantry, they will this year not have enough consumers' goods with which to purchase those surpluses. But this problem could be solved by importing ready-made goods. Foreign goods worth $100,000,000—if they could be obtained on eighteen months' credit—would solve entirely the immediate Soviet economic problem of food and goods.

* *The Nation.* August 24, 1932. Private Profits in Russia.

In the Driftway

THE Drifter's celebration of the dirt road has brought him a membership in the Society for the Preservation of Bad Roads and four pages of twin-rut reminiscences from a correspondent in Colorado. The S. P. B. R. is the pleasant invention of E. B. Whiting, who writes about it in his Boston Letter to the Springfield, Massachusetts, *Republican*. His special concern is the dirt road of New England. The Drifter wishes him luck. Moreover, he accepts the invitation to the S. P. B. R., providing, of course, there are no dues, no meetings, and no correspondence.

* * * * *

THE twin-rut reminiscences come from Robert Langan, of Denver. He incloses in his letter the newspaper account of one dirt-road rancher in Nebraska who waited eight days, with two broken legs, for someone to pass by. "I fancied you might be interested to know," he writes, "how really lonesome some of those dirt roads are." Then he continues:

> My friend, I too have plodded and drifted along twin ruts down many a horizon in God's country. I recall one trip of twelve days, covering about three hundred miles, across central Oregon and northern Nevada before the days of railroads, trucks, and buses. I and another buckaroo, being broke and minus everything, hiked into the open-range country across the High Desert along the old United States military highway. There was a paradise of twin ruts. You should have been along. We subsisted mostly on crackers and cheese along with a few hand-outs and set-downs from freight wagons and sheep-herders' outfits. We packed our water in quart Sunny Brook bottles. In one stretch we didn't see a house or human for two days. On the third day, in a strip that had been opened under the Carey Desert Land Act, we sighted a homesteader's shack far off the road. We hiked over but there was no one at home, so we just broke in and helped ourselves.
>
> All he had in the shack to eat was cornflakes and canned milk, and some rotten water in a barrel. The homesteaders hauled all their drinking water from eight to twelve miles. We built a sagebrush and buffalo-chip fire in his stove, boiled the water, and filled up on cornflakes and canned milk. It was like opening your mouth and letting the wind blow in, but at last we both filled up. Then we washed the dishes, swept the floor, and put the fire out. These rites having been attended to, as was customary and expected then as now in remote sections of the West, we addressed a little note to him, signed it, and left it sticking out underneath the lantern on the table.
>
> The moral to this story, if any, could be that the natives on the fringe, deep in the country of the twin ruts, are more wont to observe the amenities than their more progressive brethren on the macadam. Counterpoint: maybe it's because the getaway is harder. Who knows?

* * * * *

THE dry farm, caught in a web of deserted ruts that lead to no visible destination, is an unforgettable Western sight. There is an old saying to the effect that under the homestead law the government bets you 320 acres of land that you can't "prove up" on it in three years without starving to death—on most dry farms it is easier to raise a barbed-

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wire fence than a crop of wheat. The settler must still haul water for miles. For farming he must depend entirely on rain, and in many sections a growing season sufficiently wet to grow and ripen a crop is the exception rather than the rule. Children, in fact, are the most abundant crop. The Drifter has often seen ten of them emerge from a tar-paper shack in the center of nowhere to watch the slow jolting progress of a passing automobile. Only recently he heard of an episode that is probably still typical. The doctor, finding oil lamps inadequate for the work in hand, maneuvered his car outside the window into such a position that its headlights flooded the crude delivery room.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Where Do We Eat?

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Here in Berlin I religiously read *The Nation* and find it the only source of reliable information about what is really happening in the United States. But your discussions of foreign affairs sound unreal over here. Surrounded by German, Russian, and French newspapers, from the *Lokal Anzeiger* on the right to the *Rote Fahne, Pravda,* and *Réveil Ouvrier* on the left, it is hard to treat seriously the attempts of the existing governments to overcome the crisis by conferences. The League of Nations and the disarmament conference are splendid comedy, better even than "Of Thee I Sing," and the economic conference promises to be funnier still. But after the comedy comes the question, "Where do we eat?" And that is serious.

Unless *The Nation* wants to take rank with *Ballyhoo* as a humorous paper, wouldn't it do better to stop discussing with a straight face the antics of governments and take up seriously the question of how, when, and where we shall eat, after the disarmament conference has doubled the present armaments and the economic conference has destroyed what little trade and manufacture there is left? Isn't it about time for a supposedly serious paper like *The Nation* to stop discussing absurdities and devote its talents to discussing what we shall do when the inevitable collapse comes? The crash may look a long way off in New York; it looks very close in Berlin.

Berlin, December 1 ERIC A. STARBUCK

Anti-Japanese Feeling

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

I am really very sorry to see you so adamant in your attitude about the Far Eastern crisis. Of course your contentions are correct, but don't you see that your continuous propaganda against the Japanese is more and more inflaming public opinion against Japan, thus making a conflict inevitable?

Can't you see that the military clique in Japan will go to any length to gain its ends? Can't you see that they are determined to fight if they are unable to achieve what they want otherwise? And wouldn't it be far better to recognize a bad situation and make the best of it peacefully than to bring about another wholesale slaughter?

Is not this propaganda against another people which fills the American press the kind of thing we must avoid if we wish to prevent a recurrence of the catastrophe of 1914?

Toronto, December 15 B. GODFREY

Louisa May Alcott

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

As a teacher who is attempting to present literature to children as a means of criticism and understanding of their world, I wish to protest against your reviewer's praise of Louisa May Alcott in *The Nation* of November 23. It is true that Miss Alcott's influence has been insidious and widespread. She is responsible to a large extent not only for the childish taste which chooses "The Five Little Peppers" and its modern imitators, but for the adolescence which lays aside "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" for books by Booth Tarkington and Dorothy Canfield Fisher.

Her popularity is due to the impulse, not confined to children, to avoid actuality and revel in a jolly world of pious sentiment and sweetened moralizing. What help is there in "An Old-Fashioned Girl" for the present problems of youth—sexual, social, and economic? We should teach our children that literature is not an escape from their environment but an aid in conquering it. Literature must be an intellectual challenge not moral pap if it is to give the new generation the courage to face reality.

Brooklyn, December 12 ELIZABETH C. WALLACH

Einstein Propaganda

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

The Nation is to be congratulated for pointing out that Consul General Messersmith was outrageously misrepresented —and by supposedly careful news associations at that—in the Einstein affair. It is a pity that more of those newspapers which foamed at the mouth over our alleged national humiliation through the supposedly "incompetent and stupid conduct" of the Berlin Consul General's office did not take the trouble to find out the facts. Messersmith is an educator and scholar and is regarded by the Germans as the "best type of foreign representative in Berlin." So also are his first assistant, Mr. Geist, and his second assistant, Mr. Follmer.

Much of the pro-Einstein flurry in Berlin is about equal to the hysterical belief that in the United States we have no physicists, no astronomers, no mathematicians who can do more than sit anxiously at the table with Einstein in the hope of picking up a few crumbs of scientific truth as they fall from his esoteric lips.

Philadelphia, December 20 HARVEY M. WATTS

Contributors to This Issue

NORMAN THOMAS was the Socialist candidate for the Presidency in 1932.

JAMES E. BOYLE, professor of rural economy at Cornell University, is the author of "Agricultural Economics."

LOUIS FISCHER, Moscow correspondent of *The Nation,* is the author of "Machines and Men in Russia."

NEWTON ARVIN is professor of English at Smith College.

FRANK ERNEST HILL has rendered Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" into modern English verse.

HORACE GREGORY, author of a book of verse, "Chelsea Rooming House," has recently published a translation of Catullus.

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Books and Drama

Havelock Ellis

Views and Reviews. By Havelock Ellis. Houghton Mifflin Company. $5.

APPROPRIATELY enough Havelock Ellis came into the world during the year of "The Origin of Species," and, like Roebuck Ramsden, he might say to most of us, "I was an advanced thinker before you were born." Straddling the entire gulf between mid-Victorian days and our own, he had, perhaps, the most hospitable mind of his generation, but he remained, nevertheless, singularly serene in the midst of the innumerable new ideas which he was always on the alert to welcome. Of many subjects which interested him, sex was merely the one which he chose to develop most persistently, and the choice was probably in part determined by the fact that his study of it typified in many ways the effort of his generation to throw the light of fact and reason into secret places.

> It is [he remarks in a review included in the present volume] his deepest primary impulses which man is most unwilling to investigate. . . . It is not two centuries since he first ventured to begin analyzing the economic factors in life; a century ago it was an offense to question the orthodox religion . . . while the scientific study of sex is only of yesterday.

And the implications of that statement contain the ruling idea of his life.

The majority of the fifty-nine pieces included in this long collection are of no great individual importance. They cover a period of time from 1884, when he was discussing Women and Socialism, to 1932, when he was writing on Creating a New Spain, and most of them are reviews of very diverse books. But if the articles are not individually important they present in a remarkable cross-section the mind and temper of a man who may stand for the intellectual of his age. From them one gets a comprehensive idea of what the "advanced thought" of the last generation was, and one can sense what are the differences between the points of view of that generation and our own.

Ellis had, first of all, a mind more genuinely and unreservedly open than is common—even among those who make openness of mind their chief boast. He was always ready both to receive and to publicize new data or opinions, even though they ran counter to the tendencies with which he was most sympathetic. He press-agented most of the striking new theories, from those of the Lombrosian criminology, through Freudianism, on down to the neo-Nietzschean doctrines of Elie Faure. He was ready to defend what he believed valuable even in books which he thought largely mistaken, like Briffault's "The Mothers," or Lothrop Stoddard's "The Rising Tide of Color," and true to his eclectic attitude, he can speak even now with high admiration of a thinker as radically opposed as T. S. Eliot to everything for which he himself had stood. Such catholicity is not common or even commonly admired today, and the reason for it probably was that Ellis retained the shreds at least of one late-Victorian faith—the faith in the value of knowledge and tolerance as such, the faith that a somehow good was bound to emerge from any adequate combination of sound knowledge and good-will.

In no small measure that faith has been lost by the present generation. It no longer believes whole-heartedly in dispassionate study. Neither is it any longer sure that mankind, being on the right road, has merely to continue forward. Its most respected leaders do not agree with one another even on the most fundamental issues, and intransigence, acrimony, and fanaticism are once more popular. In various ways and for various reasons many of its thinkers are saying that the day of "the open mind" is past, even though, of course, they are by no means agreed upon what it should be shut against. Faith in a "beneficent illusion," faith in faith—if not in anything particular—threatens to replace faith in knowledge as such. Hence not only skepticism but tolerance as well has gone out of fashion, and there is nothing which commands less respect than eclecticism of any kind. Mr. Eliot can win fame as an Anglo-Catholic royalist, and a dozen can win fame as Communists, but one is expected to say something with vehement intransigence. If Mr. Ellis was the typical "advanced thinker" of his generation, he is far from being typical of ours. Indeed, his detachment, his intellectual hospitality, his genial serenity, and his ever-renewed interest in new ideas will probably make him seem old-fashioned, sentimental, and even a little absurd to many. Others may find something truly Olympian in the figure of a great Victorian who has kept his serenity in an intellectual atmosphere very different from that to which he and his fellows looked forward.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Hawthorne Restored

The American Notebooks. By Nathaniel Hawthorne. Based upon the Original Manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library and Edited by Randall Stewart. Yale University Press. $5.

SOPHIA HAWTHORNE would have protected herself against the judging eyes of posterity if, after editing and publishing her selections from Hawthorne's notebooks, she had committed the manuscripts to the flames, as he had committed her "maiden letters." Inconsistently, but fortunately, she refrained from this act of destruction, and now that Randall Stewart's industry has reconstructed the whole of the American Notebooks from the manuscripts in the Morgan Library, it is possible to see how far Sophia was dominated by the standards of her class and of her era. Not, of course, that any sensational confessions or secrets have been lying concealed during all these decades in the little bound volumes of Hawthorne's journal: it would be easy to exaggerate the intensity of the new light which they throw on the man's personality, and perhaps Mr. Stewart does somewhat exaggerate it. Hawthorne was a few shades less euphemistic, a few shades harsher in his judgments of people, and a few shades more skeptical, than his wife cared to have the world suppose: this is the sum of what can be said, and it is enough to make one gape and blink at the spectacle of Mrs. Hawthorne's psychopathic delicacy. But in such cases a few shades more or less amount to more than their merely quantitative measure: a Hawthorne who could talk about whores and backsides and bellies, who could call Emerson a "seeker for he knows not what," and confess to a decreasing respect for the clergy is a slightly different Hawthorne from the man his wife revealed; and this is more than enough to justify Mr. Stewart's labors.

His volume—in which (except for what has disappeared) literally all that Hawthorne wrote as a diarist before leaving for Europe is preserved—is a model of what such editing ought to be. Its real interest is not at all a sensational one, and the newspapers have given a foolish impression of it to the public. It is simply the kind of book which readers and students, once they have learned that Mrs. Hawthorne's text is bowdlerized and unreliable, are eager to have available: here are the notebooks just as Hawthorne wrote them, without purification or softening, and with the kind of annotation that makes them readable and usable. They are far from being always, in them-

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selves, intensely interesting; their mildness is sometimes monotony, and their amplitude is sometimes dulness; it is impossible to read every word of the "Twenty Days with Julian and Little Bunny"—delicate and paternal as it is—without an occasional yawn; and the "remarkable items" which Hawthorne now and then set down have somehow lost their salience. But Mr. Stewart is hardly responsible for Hawthorne's *longueurs:* his prolixity, his determination to clutch at every detail, his sometimes pedestrian pace—these are themselves only a part of the whole picture, and we may as well know the worst. They do not keep the notebooks, even in their pitiless totality, from being essential to a full understanding of the man and the writer Hawthorne.

In a scholarly preface Mr. Stewart has not only summarized the effects of Sophia Hawthorne's passion for the fig leaf; he has shown at length and in detail just how Hawthorne drew on the notebooks when he came to write his tales and romances; he has made an interesting analysis of certain character types which recur—with significant unresourcefulness—in Hawthorne's fiction; and has traced the recurrence in his work of four favorite and, indeed, obsessive themes. But the notes at the end of the book are of still greater value, I think, to the reader of Hawthorne; in fact, they are more than mere pieces of perfunctory annotation: they contain the materials for a more painstaking biography of Hawthorne than has yet been written. Based partly on letters that have not been published, and enriched by the most patient research, they fill in certain gaps in the story of Hawthorne's life, and round out our impressions of other chapters in it, with admirable fulness and precision. Just who the Upham was who served as a model for Colonel Pyncheon, what Hawthorne thought of "Mardi" and "Moby Dick," what the campaign biography of Franklin Pierce did to many of Hawthorne's friendships—these are some of the things that come out in these notes, if not literally for the first time, at least for the first time in convenient form. Altogether they make up a volume which, even if it contains no lurid revelations and forces no drastic revision of old estimates, takes its place at once as an indispensable. Physically, it is an unusually fine book.

NEWTON ARVIN

Chaucer's "Troilus," Modern

Troilus and Cressida: A Love Poem in Five Books. By Geoffrey Chaucer. Englished anew by George Philip Krapp. Random House. $3.50.

CHAUCER'S "Troilus and Criseyde" is the most ambitious of his completed poems. "The Canterbury Tales," greater in design and performance, is technically unfinished—a superb fragment. "Troilus" we have in full, and it may stand as second in significance among Chaucer's achievements. Indeed, aside from the "Tales," it is the only poem of length which exhibits Chaucer's genius in anything like its full maturity. Accordingly, those who have felt the necessity of rendering Chaucer from Middle into Modern English (and I am among them) have always conceded the importance of having a "Troilus" in poetry of our own day. Professor Krapp, well-fitted by scholarship and artistic skill to attempt such a version, now offers a translation, the first of its kind to appear.

The task he set himself is a difficult one. "Troilus" comprises all told 8,239 lines in the well-known rime-royal stanza. It has been called the first modern novel, and with justice. As a novel, it involves the building of character and the psychological interplay of feeling and action which the term implies. But it is also a medieval poem, its tapestried descriptions and mannered speeches giving it a remarkable complexity, intensified by Chaucer's love of classical allusion and scholarly atmosphere. Out of its arras-like background steps the immortal figure of Pandar, the prince of go-betweens, with his sly and bubbling humor; and there is the love night of the young prince and his lady, done as frankly as any episode in a twentieth-century love tale, but with a vivid sense of ecstatic flesh and eternal life which is peculiar to its age in idiom and beauty.

Professor Krapp has met the necessities of this difficult task with sustained skill and understanding. His version runs stanza for stanza with the original. While professing to make no word-for-word translation, he keeps close, even in detail, to the fourteenth-century poem. The verse is at times triumphantly delightful. The engravings by Eric Gill and the format given to the book by Random House give it an additional distinction as a physical thing.

Chaucer in modern English must naturally be represented by a modern English poem, and Professor Krapp, while achieving no miracles with feminine endings or in tonal quality, has kept much of Chaucer's accent, and has made a clear, flowing narrative. His rendering of the humorous scenes between Pandar and Troilus and Pandar and Cressida is particularly happy. It has been done with much modern idiom and a wit and raciness that in passages quite parallel the original. So when Pandar advises Troilus how to write a love letter, he admonishes him:

> And don't mix things that do not harmonize,
> In love and medicine the same note strike,
> But always use the style that best applies
> To what you say, so that it seems lifelike;
> For if a painter painted finny pike
> With asses' feet and headed them like apes,
> He'd be no artist but a jackanapes.

Such freedom carries its own warrant, but it has offered difficulties which Professor Krapp has not always overcome. He changes from the older forms of address to the modern "you," employs contractions like "I'll" and "you're" much more than Chaucer does, and uses expressions like "I'll bet," "splendid match" (of a marriage), "in your eye" (meaning not at all). But he also keeps "ere," "anon," "naught," and even lapses into inconsistencies like

> Why do you act like this? For shame on thee.

The result is subtly to break down the medieval atmosphere without completely building a modern one. Indeed, the modern one could not be built, and a little more acceptance of the medieval quality would in my opinion have lost no humor and definitely gained in atmosphere. Nor am I in most cases able to be happy about Professor Krapp's departures from the original meaning. Often they seem unnecessary, and add nothing. So at the beginning of the poem Chaucer speaks of his story as one

> In whiche ye may the double sorwes here
> Of Troilus, in loving of Criseyde.
> And how that she forsook him ere she deyde.

The final line has so definite and incisive a quality, and seems to offer so little difficulty, that one is surprised to get in modern English:

> What sorrows once on Troilus must fall
> In loving Cressida, who first returned
> His love, but for new love this old love spurned.

In Part IV this type of freedom is married to a strained word order and at times to a triteness of phrasing which are far from Chaucer's simple, if, in that book, not always immortal, phraseology. Nor is Professor Krapp always happy in rendering the relatively few passages of high poetry which the poem contains. The great love scene and the ending of the poem are well done—though the latter not exceptionally well—but often more could be wished for.

Yet the translation makes "Troilus and Cressida" available in modern verse with much of Chaucer's spirit and humor.

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The task which the translator faced was so intricately difficult that while the definite limitations of the modern poem should be noted in justice to Chaucer, the fact that the work has been an achievement should be gratefully remembered. Professor Krapp has brought the "father of English poetry" closer to readers who cannot or will not read him in his own tongue.

FRANK ERNEST HILL

The Tragedy of John Clare

John Clare: A Life. By J. W. and Anne Tibble. Oxford University Press. $3.75.

IT took the latter-day Georgian poets, the Edmund Blundens and J. C. Squires, to rediscover John Clare. They recognized at once their own kinship with this forgotten poet and shared his pleasure in the small delights of English rural landscape, which he painted with the sure hand and the realistic eye of a John Constable. Despite their enthusiasm and their discerning praise, John Clare's cycle of obscurity is about to repeat itself. In 1820 no well-read person in London could afford to ignore him; seven years later his name aroused a kindly smile but little interest; his work had merit, but wasn't he that extraordinary farmer from Northamptonshire who wrote of birds and flowers?

Even now, after a hundred years, reading the story of his life is like stepping into a slowly evolving horror story. His family, the Clares, had always been poor, and the changing world of agricultural society left them more helpless than ever. Out of this hopelessness came John Clare, sanguine, gentle, eyes alert, lips smiling. The winter of 1820 brought him to London. It was a short visit, and he just missed meeting Keats, who had listened to a reading of his poems. Taylor, his publisher, repeated what Keats had said: "Description too much prevails over the sentiment"; and Clare replied: "Keats keeps up a constant allusion (or illusion) to Grecian mythology, and there I cannot follow. . . . Yet the frequency of such classical accomplishments makes it wearisome to the reader, where behind every rose bush he looks for a Venus and under every laurel a thrumming Apollo." This was the negative statement of Clare's creed; it was his purpose to describe all beautiful things in nature and set them down in their true colors, to make a frog as grand as any prancing medieval stallion—away with your richly dressed and fine dead ladies.

On the day he was to have met Keats, Clare was back home at Casterton Church marrying his Patty, and soon to be surrounded by a family of small children. Clare's group of patrons assured him thirty pounds a year. The sum merely served to make him confident of earning more by writing, and did not relieve the immediate pressure of providing for mother, father, wife, and prospective additions to the family circle. Hope was to die a slow death in him. If the money earned from poetry was pitifully small, he could and did manage—by falling into debt—to stay alive. During the summer and into harvest season he worked as a day laborer. He was never idle; there was always time for writing more poetry.

There were a number of short trips to town, and Clare met Hazlitt, Lamb, and Tom Hood, who genially enough introduced his poetry to magazines and annuals. Here were candles, gossip, ale, and wine, and Clare was grateful to sit at the table, to hear for an hour the glib, busy men of London, each with his own ambitions hidden behind each separate mask. Nor could Clare assume the noble air of Wordsworth, aloof, apart from all this pleasant chatter. The London men were kind, and seeing them was a false relief from cares at home. Here at the table fears slid backward into shadows on the wall and the terrifying city streets dissolved in larger shadows out of doors. One sees Clare in a corner of a room, smiling, amiable, distraught, his mind choked with books (he had read much under pressure of self-education) and minute photographs of flowers, insects, birds —memories of all things seen, felt, and heard in Northamptonshire.

The London trips were failures, and the return home was a reminder of debts unpaid, of further struggle from one day to the next. Almost by inches Clare steered his way toward the insane asylum. His economic worries were transformed into evil spirits, nightmares that broke through the tissues of sleep and entered his waking hours. In the train of these came the awakening of an early love affair, the dream of perfect adolescent love to counterbalance the horror of reality and the nightmare beyond. The smiling surface that he presented to the world was broken by swift blasts of anger and terror. These he would vaguely understand, and then the habit of acquiescence would return; he would "know his place" and fall back into smiling sanity. In 1837 he was committed to an asylum: wife, children, and the responsibilities of life were out of sight, and the stream of poetry flowed onward. He looked everywhere for the cause of his failure, and could write only of lost dreams. Had he been another Blake he might have cured himself; he might have struck at the root of his own disorder and walked free. As it was he merely floundered onward in semi-consciousness until he died in 1864.

The present biography, a sincerely written tribute to his memory, carefully annotated and soberly presented, is one of the most depressing books I have ever read. The hardships of a Robert Burns seem light compared to Clare's; and from this record of Clare's life a sense of inarticulate tragedy rises, not unlike the feeling one experiences in reading the major novels of Thomas Hardy.

HORACE GREGORY

Stirring the Devil's Brew

Hitler. By Emil Lengyel. The Dial Press. $3.
The Cauldron Boils. By Emil Lengyel. The Dial Press. $2.50.

HITLER and Poland, Poland and Hitler—what a devil's brew these two have been stirring! Of course, Hitlerism and the Polish minorities are only two of Europe's problems. Yet no other two hold greater peril for European security and peace. Perhaps Hitler's star has begun to wane. There are certainly many indications that it has. But as a symbol of the turbulent, unharnessed power of dissatisfied Germany, Adolf Hitler is no less menacing today than he was in September, 1930. Every contribution to the further understanding of the forces that produced Hitlerism must be welcomed. Mr. Lengyel, alas, has added little to this understanding. His "Hitler" is simply another biography of the *Osaf*—a biography, it must be admitted, that ranks among the best of the many dealing with this strange messiah, but one, nevertheless, that merely looks at the man and leaves the casual reader to guess for the most part at the true historic, political, and social significance of Hitlerism.

In quite another category is Mr. Lengyel's more recent work, "The Cauldron Boils." Here the author rises far above the usual level of political journalism. He combines expert reporting with scholarly detachment, a deep knowledge of political problems with a sympathetic understanding of human needs. Mr. Lengyel does not bore us with details, yet manages to give us a comprehensive and intelligible picture of the difficulties confronting the Polish authorities on the one hand and the minority groups on the other. Nor does he swallow the propaganda which has been flowing endlessly out of Germany and Poland. Instead, he has adopted the novel though logical method of bal-

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ancing this propaganda against the feelings and opinions of the human beings directly concerned. These opinions he has determined for himself by talking with the inhabitants in Danzig, Vilna, Warsaw, the Polish Ukraine, Upper Silesia. He has visited them in their offices and workshops and on their farms. Of necessity he devotes more space to the Corridor problem than to any other, though he does not neglect the Lithuanians in Vilna, the Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto, or the German workingmen in Kattowitz. No fairer—and no more alarming—picture of the Polish problem has ever been presented. The caldron *is* boiling. There is still some hope that the devil's broth which it contains can be drawn off without great harm to anyone. A new type of state in which all the nationalities, the minority groups in full measure with the Poles themselves, have equal rights and duties, is Mr. Lengyel's solution. He would have Poland create "a confederation of equals" based on the Swiss political system, giving each group full autonomy within its particular geographical area. To this must be added sincere cooperation between Germany and Poland. Otherwise "it is difficult to see how the explosion can be avoided."

MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

Shorter Notices

A Lady Who Lost. By Alice Beal Parsons. Gotham House. $2.50.

Having cleverly juxtaposed her hostile social camps in the quiet little town of Pawlet, Mrs. Parsons manages, by a skilfully devised plot, to bring these camps into active and significant conflict with one another. There are the indigenous residents of Pawlet, exclusive and dignified, living a Victorian life of peace and complacency; the parvenu exquisites from New York, importing culture and sophistication; and lastly the Communist agitators among the mill workers. A spectacular murder in one of the oldest families and a strike among the mill-hands precipitate a state of affairs that involves all three groups in a miniature social upheaval. The factor common to these groups is the sensitive and receptive James Hillyer, who, more than any of the others, finds his old loyalties and standards challenged by the turn of events. In tracing the conflicts of James Hillyer and his relations with three women, each of whom symbolizes for him a social order, Mrs. Parsons gives to her readers the twofold pleasure of following a moving love story and at the same time witnessing her keen and intelligent analysis of the cross-currents of contemporary life.

A Wanderer in Woodcuts. By H. Glintenkamp. Farrar and Rinehart. $3.

There is something strangely ascetic about a woodcut in black and white; and when more than a hundred of them are strung together to tell a visual story, you feel like a monk in sackcloth. When Mr. Glintenkamp forgets he is making a grand tour through the Continent and lets the feel of his subject take hold of him, he does some splendid gouging, and is the equal of our best woodcutters. Most of the time, however, he is the facile commentator with his stock in trade of technical effects, the woodcut reporter on a holiday. Not all the comments that accompany his woodcuts are trivial; Prague, he wisely observes, is "the meeting of Eastern and Western culture—it is the beginning of the Oriental mood falling on Europe."

Richard Wagner: The Story of an Artist. By Guy de Pourtalès. Translated by Lewis May. Harper and Brothers. $4.

Successful with his popular portraits of Chopin, Liszt, Ludwig II of Bavaria, and Nietzsche in Italy, Guy de Pourtalès now applies his romantic method to that superlative egotist, Richard Wagner. It is by far the longest of his books, and in its consistency the most satisfactory. But he is more the advocate than the impartial delineator, and there are too many omissions of significant data and too many errors in facts for this biography to rank high as a work of reference.

The Spirit of World Politics. By William Ernest Hocking. The Macmillan Company. $5.

Professor Hocking deals with the relationships of imperial Powers to "backward" peoples. He describes the administration of mandated nations and colonies, particularly in Egypt, Syria, and Palestine, where he has spent several years of travel. He observes the ironic situation of the new nations of the Near East, where the gain of nationhood is balanced by the loss of a national culture. Professor Hocking's observations are very keen; the pretensions of imperial "missions" are ingeniously exposed; the questions of the fitness of one people to govern others and of the fitness of subject peoples to govern themselves are subjected to penetrating discussion. The ebb of imperialism is made decisively clear. Such thoughtful and comprehensive work is very valuable. Though the book is occasionally marred by unsuccessful flights of rhetoric, it is composed in a readable manner.

Three Chaucer Studies. By Russell Krauss, Haldeen Braddy, and C. Robert Kase. Oxford University Press. $3.50.

This volume makes a threefold contribution to the discussion of Chaucer's life and works which perennially goes on. Mr. Krauss establishes an excellent base for his claim that Thomas Chaucer was the son of Philippa Chaucer but not of Geoffrey, and for his theory that John of Gaunt, not Geoffrey, was the father in the case—this, too, not before Geoffrey's marriage to Philippa but several years after it. Mr. Braddy seems to prove that the "Parlement of Foules" was written in 1377 rather than 1381, the date traditionally assigned to the poem. And Mr. Kase discusses two groups of the "Canterbury Tales," G and DE, as insertions "into a framework not entirely prepared for their reception." Each of the three studies should permanently modify the problem which it approaches, and each of them is distinctly a credit to American scholarship.

The Life and Writings of Hugh Henry Brackenridge. By Claude M. Newlin. Princeton University Press. $5.

In this valuable monograph Professor Newlin makes use of an expedient which is hereby recommended to all who have occasion to write books about minor literary figures. Recognizing that there is no possibility that Brackenridge's books will be reprinted, he has printed extended selections from them at strategic points. Hugh Henry Brackenridge is interesting from many points of view. He was the author of "Modern Chivalry" (the first two sections of which were reprinted in Greenberg's Rogues' Library in 1926). He is interesting as a type of educated man on the frontier, as one of the original Jeffersonians, as a man deeply implicated in the Whiskey Rebellion, and as an important early American lawyer. He was educated at Princeton and numbered Freneau among his early literary associates, taught school for a while, served in the Revolution as a chaplain, studied law, had a fling at literature, and emigrated to Pittsburgh in 1781. He made himself a power in the community, though his point of view and lively capacity for criticism debarred him from political success. He wrote, in addition to "Modern Chivalry," much satirical doggerel which is freely reprinted in this book. Probably the most exciting episode in his career was his connection with the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794, and under Professor Newlin's hand this matter is made to illuminate the whole question of the reception of Hamiltonian principles by the frontiersmen. "'Modern Chivalry,'" says Professor Newlin, "which is our first back-country book, is the

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result of using classic European literary traditions in an attempt to impart 'seasonable lessons' to the tousle-headed frontier democracy." It was extremely popular in its day and is very interesting reading even now. Professor Newlin has presented a fascinating "character" exceedingly well.

Drama

"Lucrece"

MUCH was expected of "Lucrece." Thornton Wilder translated it from the French of André Obey, and it has been staged with obvious skill at the Belasco Theater, but the admirers of Miss Katharine Cornell are frankly bewildered by a method and an intention very different from any with which we are familiar. Apparently the effort of the author is to produce an effect not unlike that of the "classic" drama of Racine, and in the pursuit of his aim he has thrown to the winds all the traditions of contemporary playwriting to produce a dramatic recitation bound to puzzle any audience which expects a play to be a play.

The story is simply Livy's tale of the Roman matron whom Tarquin violated, and its main outlines are conceived much as Racine, or Shakespeare, would have conceived them. Early Rome becomes a Renaissance court where the warriors are dressed in doublet and hose; the background is a permanent set of pseudo-classic columns; and much of the story is told through the mouths of two masked "narrators" who stand at the side to relate what has happened or to comment upon the events—many of them in pantomime—which are acted out before the eyes of the spectator. The tale of fortitude and woe proceeds with grave decorum to its expected end, and such comment as the author has to make is summed up by the concluding remarks of the two narrators. "Poor frightened bird—poor deer," says the female figure in Shakespeare's ornate words. "This," replies in substance the male narrator, "is history. Rome's business was to teach the world courage and order and decorum. Lucrece is a necessary, an inevitable, part of her great story. It had to be."

If M. Obey has given us any explanation or defense of his unusual technique I am not familiar with it, but I can imagine that it might run something like this. The attempt of the stage to reproduce the manners and costumes of a particular epoch is, like all realism, essentially romantic in that it lays great stress upon the ideas of time and chance. It implies that the ways in which men have differed from one another are even more important than the ways in which they have always been alike, and it goes along with a relativist attitude toward morals because it suggests that in a world where everything has local or temporary aspects even the spiritual meaning of events depends upon the local conditions and manners. Classicism, on the other hand, is interested only in eternal things and, indeed, founds itself upon the assertion that some things are eternal, that below the accidental and changing lies the essential and permanent. Hence classicism disregards that realism which occupies itself with outward things. So far as its subject matter is concerned, it makes no difference when the events occurred or what costumes its actors wore. And in order to emphasize this fact, in order not to distract the attention from the essential, it sets its action in a conventional setting and tells its story in a completely artificial manner, thus putting the whole out of place and time. The values of the story I have to tell are not affected in the slightest degree by local circumstance. I am not, like a romantic relativist, making a "study of the early Roman attitude toward the question of a woman's honor." I am, on

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the other hand, presenting the eternal aspects of lust and pride versus fortitude and dignity. Hence my "Lucrece" cannot be realistic and accurate. It must be abstract, formalized, and without local habitation.

So much for what I imagine to be the theory behind M. Obey's play. Yet the fact remains that for all the persuasiveness of such arguments and for all the dignity which it does achieve the work still lacks the great majesty which alone could make it really successful. To strip oneself of the aid which variety and incidental ornament provide, to dispense with the vivacity of realism, and to depend upon nothing except the grave beauty of sculpturesque outline is to make upon oneself demands which only great genius can meet. There was only one Racine as there was only one Milton, and "Lucrece" does not wholly escape the curse of frigid formalism which has fallen upon ninety-nine out of every hundred efforts to write plays in the "classical" manner. Realism of either the romantic or the everyday sort may be incompatible with the greatest and the most exalted art, but it is an invention which has saved from dulness most of those artists of the second class upon whom the world has had to depend for most of its books and plays and poems.

As Lucrece Miss Cornell is extremely effective, achieving a style in which a certain decorum is not incompatible with an expression of genuine anguish. Yet the high point of her performance, as well as the high point of the play itself, is the scene in which Tarquin wakes her from her sleep and announces his intended violence. That scene is, indeed, a scene of exceptional power, but it is also the one in which the author approaches most closely to the methods of modern dramaturgy. One realizes that Racine would never have written it, that to him it would have been something to be told about just as obviously as, to a modern playwright, it is the one inevitable *scène à faire*. To say that is to say that M. Obey abandons his method at the crucial moment and very nearly disproves what would appear to be his own thesis. JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

More Mountains, More Mice

IN view of the unparalleled size and magnificence of the theater, in view of the deafening blast of advance ballyhoo, in view, above all, of the money its sponsors had to spend, the inaugural program of the Radio City Music Hall was the most uninspired that could possibly be imagined. Patrons of Mr. Rothafel's (endearingly, "Roxy's") former theaters will remember those elaborately expensive twenty-minute interludes of boredom that used to precede the feature picture. Imagine a series of these stretched over an entire evening and you have Mr. Rothafel's present offering. Former Roxy patrons will remember, again, that there were always scenes from "Carmen" on the program. These become the *pièce de résistance* of the opening week's bill at Radio City Music Hall. Besides doubling the quantity of dancers, soldiers, matadors, real horses, cigarette girls, etc., Mr. Rothafel has introduced the interesting innovation of a dancer in a 1932 New York costume appearing in the midst of the "Carmen" revelers. In addition to the operatic scenes there are a choric dance for an antique Greek tragedy by Martha Graham and her dance group, Doctor Rockwell, with his medical lecture, and Ray Bolger, an amusing modern tap dancer. This indicates either a very catholic taste on Mr. Rothafel's part, or, what seems more probable, the complete absence of any taste at all. One suspects that his theory is that he should give his patrons Art and entertainment, and that these are two separate and distinct things which must be alternated in different acts: that entertainment has nothing to do with Art and that Art has nothing to do with entertainment. Or perhaps Mr. Rothafel's is the much simpler theory that the important thing is to spend money, buy names, and put on elaborately lavish "spectacles" with enormous choruses, and to please everyone by having Martha Grahams for the highbrows and Dr. Rockwells for the lowbrows. But he may yet live to learn that congruity is not only an artistic canon, but a commercial one.

Of the revival of "Cyrano de Bergerac" at the New Amsterdam, with Walter Hampden in the title role, there is little to be said except that Mr. Hampden acts the part with as much spirit as ever and that the supporting cast is competent.

H. H.

☐ JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH says ☐

ALICE IN WONDERLAND. Civic Repertory Theater. It will fascinate children and adults alike by the reality of its unreality and the sense of its nonsense.

ANOTHER LANGUAGE. Shubert Theater. Hilarious perennial exposing almost anybody's family.

ANYBODY'S GAME. Bijou Theater. To be reviewed later.

BIOGRAPHY. Guild Theater. An intelligent and sinewy comedy about what happens when a cultivated woman of the world tries to choose between a pompous opportunist and an unmanageable idealist.

CRIMINAL AT LARGE. Forty-eighth St. Theater. Exciting and credible tale of crime in a country house. One superb performance.

DINNER AT EIGHT. Music Box Theater. Trick melodrama about what happened to the various guests invited to a dinner party. The general public likes it very much better than I do.

GOODBYE AGAIN. Masque Theater. To be reviewed later.

GIRLS IN UNIFORM. Booth Theater. To be reviewed later.

LUCRECE. Belasco Theater. Reviewed in this issue.

MADEMOISELLE. Playhouse. Alice Brady and Grace George make a sentimental comedy pleasant enough.

MUSIC IN THE AIR. Alvin Theater. Pleasant operetta with music by Jerome Kern and a book rather better than average.

SUCCESS STORY. Maxine Elliott Theater. What happened to a radical when he rose in business. The best drama of the season.

THE LATE CHRISTOPHER BEAN. Henry Miller Theater. Light comedy from the French completely rewritten by Sidney Howard and charmingly played by Pauline Lord and others. All things considered, it is much the most enjoyable comedy of the season.

TWENTIETH CENTURY. Broadhurst Theater. To be reviewed next week.

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